GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:150
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2016
Treatment of Cancer
Chowdhary Shri Pankaj

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken note of lack of facilities to treat cancer patient and non-availability of trained staff and doctors in the oncology departments in various Government hospitals at Centre and State levels and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government proposes to make required arrangements in this regard and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether radiotherapy/chemotherapy for the treatment of cancer is being affected as posts of oncologist remained vacant for more than three years in these hospitals and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the corrective steps taken to provide hassle free treatment to cancer patients across the country?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 150* FOR 25TH NOVEMBER, 2016

(a) to (d): Health being a State subject, data on lack of facilities to treat cancer patients and non-availability of trained staff and doctors including vacant posts in the oncology departments in various Government hospitals is not maintained centrally.
Cancer can be diagnosed and treated at various levels in the Government health care system. Diagnosis and treatment of cancer requires specialist doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers. For doctors, disciplines such as surgery, medicine, radiotherapy, radio diagnosis, palliative care among others are relevant. As such the number of Allopathic doctors as proportion of the population in the country is less as compared to WHO norms. The number of radiotherapy machines in the country is less than the norms of WHO and International Atomic Energy Agency.
While doctors with D. M. (Medical Oncology), M.Ch (Surgical Oncology) and M.D. (Radiation Oncology) treat Cancer patients in higher level tertiary care hospitals, Cancer is also being treated in hospitals by other Doctors such as General Surgeons, Gynecologists, ENT Surgeons etc., depending on the type and site of Cancer. In fact, Cancer is being diagnosed and treated at various levels in the Government health care system.
At present, there are 114 seats to be filled up every year in various Oncology superspecialities. In addition, there are 200 seats in MD Radiotherapy who are also largely involved in cancer treatment.
To augment the availability of doctors in the Oncology Department, the ratio of teachers to students has been revised from 1:1 to 1:3 in subjects of Medical Oncology and Surgical Oncology.
Government of India is implementing a comprehensive National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke (NPCDCS) with focus on 3 sites of Cancer namely breast, cervical and oral Cancer. From 2013-14 onwards, interventions under NPCDCS for prevention, early detection, diagnosis and treatment of Cancer, which can be taken up upto District level, have been brought under the umbrella of National Health Mission. NCD clinics are being set up under the programme.

The Government of India under "Strengthening of Tertiary Care of Cancer" scheme is also assisting to establish/strengthen State Cancer Institutes (SCI) and Tertiary Care Cancer Centres (TCCC) which will mentor all cancer related activities in different parts of the country. Setting up of National Cancer Institute at Jhajjar (Haryana) and 2nd campus of Chittranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata has been approved.
In addition to the facilities for treatment of Cancer and Heart diseases in the State Governments Health Institutes, the Central Government Institutions such as All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Safdurjung Hospital, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, PGIMER Chandigarh, JIPMER Puducherry, Chittaranjan National Cancer Institute, Kolkata, etc. also provide such facilities. Oncology has a focus in case of new AIIMS and many upgraded institutions under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY).
Treatment of Cancer is free or subsidized at the Government Healthcare Delivery Systems.
Though public health is a State subject, Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments' free drug service

initiative under NPCDCS based on their Programme Implementation Plans. To make available Cancer and Cardiovascular drugs at discounted prices, Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) outlets have been opened at 12 Central Government institutions. Jan Aushadhi stores are set up by Department of Pharmaceuticals to provide generic drugs at affordable prices.

Financial assistance for life threatening diseases, to the patients living below poverty line, is provided by Central Government under the schemes Rashtriya Arogya Nidhi (RAN), Health Minister's Cancer Patients Fund (HMCPF), State Illness Assistance Fund (SIAF) and Health Minister's Discretionary Grant (HMDG).